



Secretary Serena McIlwain
Maryland Department of the Environment
Montgomery Park Business Center
1800 Washington Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21230

Re: Maryland's Climate Pathway Report

October 16th, 2023

Secretary McIlwain,

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment on Maryland's Climate Pathways report. **By implementing Maryland's Climate Pathway, you can give our children and grandchildren the healthier future they deserve.**

Maryland has positioned itself as a national leader in the efforts to fight the worst effects of climate change with our goal of reaching 60% emissions reductions by 2031. We look forward to working with you to help realize these critical goals.

The *Maryland's Climate Pathway* report includes a vast set of recommendations for further policies needed to hit the goals laid out in the Climate Solutions Now Act including:

- Expanding the state's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) to generate 100% of the state's electricity from clean sources;
- Reducing emissions from buildings by implementing the Building Emissions Performance Standards and the state's energy efficiency program (EmPOWER), and set all-electric construction standards and zero-emissions appliance standards;
- Increasing public transit options and access to safe walking/biking paths and reducing emissions from vehicles and expanding electric vehicle electrification infrastructure.

This report makes clear that global warming solutions are all around us - we just need to use them.

We urge you to consider a few key policies and principles as you finalize the State's 2031 Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plan to implement the Climate Solutions Now Act.

We hope you will work quickly to:

Improve the efficiency of our homes. The cleanest, least polluting energy is the energy we never use. Improving the efficiency of our homes and shifting to efficient electric appliances and heating will help lower utility bills and protect our health. While the shift won't happen overnight, the state should maximize energy efficiency resources from the Inflation Reduction Act and update and improve EmPOWER Maryland, the state's energy efficiency program, to better align with the state's climate goals while maintaining consumer protections and a focus on energy conservation.

Codify a 100% clean electricity. We look forward to working with you to implement Gov. Moore's commitment to 100% clean energy generation in Maryland by 2035 and urge you to go even further to support a state-wide goal of making sure 100% of the electricity Maryland uses comes from clean renewable sources by 2040. 11 other states have taken similar action and it's time for Maryland to do the same.

Sincerely,

Emily Scarr, Director, Maryland PIRG Foundation

Johanna Neumann, Senior Director, Campaign for 100% Renewable Energy, Environment America Research & Policy Center

Maryland PIRG Foundation is a statewide non-partisan, non-profit organization based in Baltimore. With public debate around important issues often dominated by special interests pursuing their own narrow agendas, Maryland PIRG Foundation offers an independent voice that works on behalf of the public interest.

Environment Maryland Research & Policy Center has one mission that drives everything we do: to protect our natural world. We envision a better, greener Maryland: one that protects and restores more places where all life can thrive and offers us and our children the opportunity to live healthier, more enriching lives.